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dependents in whose company we spent most of our childhood. Min-kadaws divide their servants into "downstairs servants" and "upstairs servants". The downstairs variety are the usual domestics—cook, boy, gardener, office boy and so on. The upstairs variety are not referred to as "servants" (*a-say-khan*); they are girls whose work is all done in the rooms upstairs, who sleep there and spend the greatest part of their day in the quarters inhabited by the family. In many cases this system is one of abuse and oppression. The girls may be poor relatives—cousins in the fourth degree perhaps—or they may be bought up from poor parents who, for a sum of Rs. 25 to Rs. 100 down and intermittent gratuities, will allow their children to go into a theoretically better home. These girls come at any age from seven to fourteen years. They are clothed and fed and their *mon-bo* (sweetmeat money) depends entirely on the mistress they chance upon. When they are young they play with the children of the house and when older they sweep and dust the upstairs rooms—rooms on which we walk only barefoot as distinct from the downstairs rooms swept by an Indian sweeper, and on which they use a feather broom instead of wielding a broom of coconut sticks, thus sealing the distinction; they also wash the personal garments of the household, look after the children and all other housemaid duties. They are rarely kept alone; there may be up to four or five according to the household. The relationship with the family is that of feudal serf or poor relation. They do not call their employers *thakin* and *thakinma* (master and mistress); they address them as Aunt and Uncle-older-than-own-parents; they call the children of the family elder-brother or sister-so-and-so and address all relatives as the children do, but they have no definite salary, no rights and no external connections. It is only in rare cases, however, that girls reach the age of thirty in an environment not congenial to them; in ideal circumstances it is the duty of the mistress to settle them in an advantageous marriage by the time they are twenty-one or twenty-two. Failing this, the girls generally manage to elope, for elopements are frequent and not very scandalous in Burma.

In our childhood, when the family was big with growing children, we had five girls with us at one time. Of these, three were our relatives—two sisters, Ma Ohn Kyi and Ma Mya Shwe, who were third cousins of my father, and Ma Ngwe Yin, a second cousin of my mother. Both their families were far too poor to keep them. We had to pay respect to Ma Ohn Kyi and Ma Ngwe Yin who were both a few years older than me and called us all by our name, but nobody stopped us from bullying the young Mya Shwe and the two unrelated girls as much as we liked. A-Kyi, as we called Ma Ohn Kyi, was always treated as the senior one because my parents considered that she had a good moral character.

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the thief would soon lose his patience and cut off the troublesome ankle joint, gave a swift and gentle cut at the hand with his own dah, and went on calmly with his work, while the thief realizing the justice of it, quietly withdrew his hand and fled. To these tucked-away gardens, also, came the deformed and mentally defective members of households, to find a more secluded place from public jeering both of themselves and of their families. We felt sad to see the goitre growths and scarred faces, but as children we joined in with the baiting of old crones whose great accomplishment was to utter automatic and irrelevant imprecations whenever they were dug in the ribs. 674 [732]

A much happier aspect was that in Ye the young people were always eloping. As I grew older I used to wonder that love came so easily and in such unlikely places. A proper elopement must have certain attendant circumstances. Usually the parents do not agree to it, but quite often also the two people are very young and feel that love is wicked and is bound to be disapproved of, so they decide to elope. There is always a confidante of the girl's or man's or both, to help with the arrangements for the flight, or for the refuge. The girl usually wraps a few clothes in a small cloth bundle, and from the meeting place the journey to the secret destination is made by canoe, or bullock cart. The disappearance of the girl is soon discovered, the alarm is given, people rush about with exciting news, mother and father make a crying visit to the house of the elder friend and adviser of their or the young man's family, and beat their breasts at the shamelessness and wickedness of the girl. The hidden couple are soon tracked down, a reconciliation takes place and a proper wedding feast is held for the young people. Then the whole disgrace is completely forgotten, until about seventeen years later, when perhaps the daughter of the bride elopes, and her friends commiserating with her tears, shake their heads sadly and say that this is *nga-yè*, the punishment for her own sin of seventeen years before. 583 •

entirely dispensed with. If the parents of both houses are agreeable, the contracting parties get married with most ardent lover-like rapidity. The age, too, has become very much younger. Most lads get married when they are eighteen or nineteen; thirteen or fourteen is a common age for the girls. Runaway marriages are common enough, and though the parents may be angry, they are usually too easy-going and indolent to take any energetic action in the matter, and let the couple find out their mistake and come and ask for pardon and a house to live in, which is seldom refused. Occasionally in Lower Burma a stern father demands that they shall be separated until the lad has got a situation for himself, but this is ordinarily little more than a mere form of speech. In Upper Burma, where food is scarce and working hands more valuable, the husband is brought to the girl's parents' house and made to do his share towards supporting the household.

The preliminary courting is naturally conducted in the old fashion, best known to those who have had experience of their own in such matters. The parties meet at pwés, the girl perhaps selling cheroots, fried garlic, le'pet, and what not, and therefore being readily accessible to any swain. It must not be supposed that keeping a stall is regarded as anything derogatory. Numbers of perfectly well-to-do women set them up regularly; some even have daily work in the bazaars, and very often a girl commences occupations of the kind with the view of attracting the young men and securing a husband. Then there are meetings at pagoda feasts, in the zayats and at friends' houses, so that there are plenty of chances of introduction to eligible swains, even without calling in the assistance of the aungthwè. This functionary makes it a regular occupation to know all the attractions, physical and sordid, of all the young women in the place, and for a small consideration, or sometimes merely for love of his trade, brings young couples together and arranges places of meeting for them. He is, of course, most useful where an impecunious youth aspires to the hand of a rich merchant's or high official's daughter. He manages an introduction in a roundabout way to avoid arousing suspicions, praises his client's appearance and

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lata for the original flavoured earth, and of Thale rice for the leguminous creeper, desire arose among them, and four of the men took the four women to wife. The fifth man naturally resented being left compulsorily single, and pelted the happy couples with stones on their marriage night. Sympathy with the feelings of this archetypal bachelor has perpetuated the stone-throwing by the lu-byos down to the present day, and if there is no dearth of eligible spinsters in our times, the lonely bachelor may be allowed to express his envy of his friend's bliss without being accused of anything but gross cupidity.

After marriage the couple almost always live for two or three years in the house of the bride's parents, the son-in-law becoming one of the family and contributing to its support. Setting up a separate establishment, even in Rangoon, where the young husband is a clerk in an English office, is looked upon with disfavour as a piece of pride and ostentation. If the girl is an only daughter, she and her husband stay on till the old people die.

Polygamy is recognised and permitted, but practically does not exist now in British territory. A man with more than one wife becomes a subject of common talk, and a native official now living is well known all through the delta as the myo-ok with twenty wives. In native territory the right to have several wives was equally little used in practice. Many of the high officials who travelled about over large districts had wives in almost all the towns they visited—a custom in great measure induced by the rule which provided that the mayā-gyi, the chief wife, had to be left in Mandalay as a hostage for the fidelity of the official. But the great bulk of the people are, and always have been, monogamous. King Mindōn had fifty-three recognised wives, of whom thirty-seven survived him. His children numbered one hundred and ten, of whom upwards of fifty survived him. Besides the wives, like Solomon, he had numerous concubines. So, indeed, have many lesser people.

The forbidden degrees are few. Marriages with mother, daughter, sister, and half-sister, aunt, grandmother, and granddaughter, are forbidden, but none else. A son may marry his stepmother; it is expressly mentioned in the

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584 trust! Of course many of these turned out well. Parents are good to their children, and if they can, they will give their daughter the husband of her choice. They remember what youth is—nay, they themselves never grow old, I think; they never forget what once was to them now is to their children. So if it be possible all may yet go well. Social differences are not so great as with us, and the barrier is easily overcome. I have often known servants in a house marry the daughters, and be taken into the family; but, of course, sometimes things do not go so smoothly. And then? Well, then there is usually an elopement, and a ten days' scandal; and sometimes, too, there is an elopement for no reason at all save that hot youth cannot abide the necessary delay.

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For life is short, and though to-day be to us, who can tell for the morrow? During the full moon there is no night, only a change to silver light from golden; and the forest is full of delight. There are wood-cutters' huts in the ravines where the water falls, soft beds of torn bracken and fragrant grasses where great trees make a shelter from the heat; and for food, that is easily arranged. A basket of rice with a little salt-fish and spices is easily hidden in a favourable place. You only want a jar to cook it, and there is enough for two for a week; or it is brought day by day by some trusted friend to a place previously agreed upon.

All up and down the forest there are flowers for her hair, scarlet dak blossoms and orchid sprays and, jasmine stars; and for occupation through the hours each has a new world to explore full of

wonderful undreamt-of discoveries, lit with new light and mysterious with roseate shadows, a world of 'beautiful things made new' for those forest children. So that when the confidante, an aunt maybe or a sister, meets them by the sacred fig-tree on the hill, and tells them that all difficulties are removed, and their friends called together for the marriage, can you wonder that it is not without regret that they fare forth from that enchanted land to ordinary life again?

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It is, as I have said, not always the man who is the proposer of the flight. Nay, I think indeed that it is usually the girl. 'Men have more patience.'

I had a Burmese servant, a boy, who may have been twenty, and he had been with me a year, and was beginning to be really useful. He had at last grasped the idea that electro-plate should not be cleaned with monkey-brand soap, and he could be trusted not to put up rifle cartridges for use with a double-barrelled gun; and he chose this time to fall in love with the daughter of the headman of a certain village where I was in camp.

He had good excuse, for she was a delicious little maiden with great coils of hair, and the voice of a wood-pigeon cooing in the forest, and she was very fond of him, without a doubt.

So one evening he came to me and said that he must leave me—that he wanted to get married, and could not possibly delay. Then I spoke to him with all that depth of wisdom we are so ready to display for the benefit of others. I pointed out to him that he was much too young, that she was much too young also—she was not eighteen—and that there

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● 583 was absolutely nothing for them to marry on. I further pointed out how ungrateful it would be of him to leave me ; that he had been paid regularly for a year, and that it was not right that now, when he was at last able to do something besides destroy my property, he should go away.

The boy listened to all I had to say, and agreed with it all, and made the most fervent and sincere promise to be wise ; and he went away after dinner to see the girl and tell her, and when I awoke in the morning my other servants told me the boy had not returned.

Shortly afterwards the headman came to say that his daughter had also disappeared. They had fled, those two, into the forest, and for a week we heard nothing. At last one evening, as I sat under the great fig-tree by my tent, there came to me the mother of the girl, and she sat down before me, and said she had something of great importance to impart : and this was that all had been arranged between the families, who had found work for the boy whereby he might maintain himself and his wife, and the marriage was arranged. But the boy would not return as long as I was in camp there, for he was bitterly ashamed of his broken vows and afraid to meet my anger. And so the mother begged me to go away as soon as I could, that the young couple might return. I explained that I was not angry at all, that the boy could return without any fear ; on the contrary, that I should be pleased to see him and his wife. And, at the old lady's request, I wrote a Burmese letter to that effect, and she went away delighted.

They must have been in hiding close by, for it was early next morning that the boy came into my tent alone and very much abashed, and it was some little time before he could recover himself and talk freely as he would before, for he was greatly ashamed of himself.

But, after all, could he help it?

If you can imagine the tropic night, and the boy, full of high resolve, passing up the village street, now half asleep, and the girl, with shining eyes, coming to him out of the hibiscus shadows, and whispering in his ear words—words that I need not say—if you imagine all that, you will understand how it was that I lost my servant.

They both came to see me later on in the day after the marriage, and there was no bashfulness about either of them then. They came hand-in-hand, with the girl's father and mother and some friends, and she told me it was all her fault: she could not wait.

'Perhaps,' she said, with a little laugh and a side-glance at her husband—'perhaps, if he had gone with the thakin to Rangoon, he might have fallen in love with someone there and forgotten me; for I know they are very pretty, those Rangoon ladies, and of better manners than I, who am but a jungle girl.'

And when I asked her what it was like in the forest, she said it was the most beautiful place in all the world.

Things do not always go so well. Parents may be obdurate, and flight be impossible; or even her love may not be returned, and then terrible things

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The key to ²⁶high positions lies in education in the high schools and Universities. Family support is necessary for this and the student is constantly aware of his obligation to succeed for their benefit. "One tree can support a thousand birds" illustrate the dependency of the relatives on the successful individual.

In order to succeed one needs each of these three qualities: *KARMA* (fate or luck), *NIYAM* (intelligence), and *WIRIYA* (industriousness). The failure of any one can cause the lack of success. Ordinarily, however, *KARMA* is blamed in cases of failure - and the other two credited for success. The concept of *KARMA* includes merit and demerit compiled in all previous existences. Because of this convenient excuse the true causes of failure are seldom analysed by the individual and he does not have a sense of personal blame or shame. Also social condemnation does not fall heavily on the unsuccessful who has tried and failed. However, one should finish what he starts or not attempt it, "once you start climbing the pole you must reach the top". The individual may not achieve fame or fortune but he is expected to maintain his birth position. His relatives, who suffer shame if he does not, help him. A major contribution of the individual is an advantageous marriage within or above his occupational group.

What does one strive for, by work, in the Burmese society? Not subsistence, for food is ordinarily cheap and easily attained in the villages. Clothing, shelter and the other necessities of life are also not the objective. The subsistence pattern is simple and essentially homogeneous throughout the village.

The ordinary head of a household thinks of three major benefits to be gained from wealth. The first and most immediate are jewels to adorn the women of the family. The status of the family is reflected in public by the bangles, necklaces and earrings worn by the ladies. Diamonds are most prized and the size is important. However, most important is that each female be provided with "a set" of jewelry. The wife of the middle and upper status group particularly will prod the husband until he provides these necessities. The women's clothing and also the husbands and his son's must also be the finest they can afford.

The second urge for wealth arises out of the desire for old age security. Hence gold coins are saved (hidden) against the day when

were dropped in favour of cheaper Rangoon products. The new items added to the diet in camp were either similar to those of Pathwe known before. No real innovations were attempted with success.

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SOCIAL AND CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

An attempt will be made under this heading to present some of the major routine activities carried out by U Myaing's family in every day life. Because of the complex nature of the socio-ceremonial activities it will be possible only to outline the more important of these activities. They may be grouped under the headings of: (1) activities concerning the family relations, (2) activities relating the family to their community and state and (3) activities relating the family to the supernatural. Wherever possible the Pathwe situation will be compared to that of the refugee camp.

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Family Relations

Marriage

U Myaing's account of the initial step in the formation of a family is of some interest. When a couple in love have money, they might marry with a proper ceremony; when they do not, they have to elope. U Myaing eloped with his wife. Some people take this course because the parents are not agreeable to the match. Others feel that it takes too much trouble and time to get married with proper ceremony. Others again elope because they do not like the match made for them by parents. U Myaing and Ma Aye Myaing gave as reason the point that it took too long and too much trouble to get properly married. Also at that time they could not afford to spend a great deal of money.

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Some time after elopement there are attempts either on the part of the parents or the elders of the village to effect a reconciliation between the parties concerned. The couple does not usually take the initiative in these proceedings "because the young man is in the position of one who has stolen something from the girl's parents" and consequently has to lie low. The reconciliation takes place through the elders of the village, who approach the parents and request them to take back the young couple. Some couples stay away seven days, some a month, and some a year before rejoining the parental fold. The reconciliation itself is somewhat similar to a wedding ceremony, and

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food and refreshment might be provided. After this the couple may put up either at the youth's home or the girl's home.

In modern times there have been very few cases of people from the villages getting properly married. In the past there used to be many marriages through the agency of match-makers, but now most people elope. U Myaing estimates that only about two couples in a hundred get married first. Daw Aw Zar also eloped with U Myaing's father. (U Myaing was not very sure of this and so called out the question to Daw Aw Zar, who replied "Hae-mathi-bur-bu"; "Hae - I don't know.") U Myaing and Ma Aye Myaing eloped, not because her parents would have raised any objections, but because it had become the usual thing to do. Out of all the marriages contracted by members of U Myaing's extended family (over 60 families), only seven were conducted with proper rites and ceremonies. These were the wealthy members of the family who had their status to consider.

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U Myaing was in love with Ma Aye Myaing for a period extending two years prior to their elopement. He made a practice of visiting her house and of going with her to Pwees and entertainments, in the company of a large group of other people. Her parents never allowed her to go out alone with him. "That is the nature of parents - they will not allow that."

"Of course there were occasions when we met, just the two of us; but that was more through accident than design. For instance, I used to meet her on the village street. There are men who ask for assignations from girls, but they are men who do not have consideration for the sisters of other men. I am not one of those. When we were ready to elope, I told Ma Aye Myaing that I was coming for her on such and such a night. Some daughters repeat this to their parents, "Mother, I am about to go along with him" and Ma Aye Myaing was one such. I also told my parents."

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On the appointed night, at about nine or ten o'clock, U Myaing collected nine or ten of the beams of the locality of help prevent any possible trouble on the part of the jealous suitors from the girl village, made his way to Ma Aye Myaing's house and brought her along with him. An elopement is a joyous affair and U Myaing informs us that he used to often accompany friends when they went to elope with their girls. The girl is taken, either on foot, or by bullock cart if the distance is great, to the youth's village; and if they happen

to belong to the same village than she is taken elsewhere. When they arrive, the whole group sits down to chat about the day's proceedings and various other matters.

If the parents do not agree to the match and keep their daughter under strict surveillance, the day may have to be postponed several times before the allotment is successful.

KINSHIP SYSTEM

U Myaing was asked to give the names and relationships of as many members of his consanguinal family as possible. In the course of several interviews he remembered no less than 201 individuals plus 64 spouses. Only 26 names of the consanguinal relatives and 8 of the affinal spouses (both 12% of the respective totals) were forgotten. These figures are one indication of the importance of family relations. Of the blood relatives 75 of 21 families were on U Myaing's father's side and 126 of 40 families on his mother's side. Greater emphasis on the mother's side is also seen in the fact that the families of all siblings of mother's father were remembered while father's father's siblings families were disregarded. This is undoubtedly due in part to Daw Aw Zar, his mother, being the surviving parent living with him but is also probably part of a larger pattern.

Relationship terms are used in addressing the members of the immediate family, with exceptions for certain situations and individuals (for differentiating individuals; persons in junior relationships) where the proper name or nickname is used, the more remote relations are ordinarily addressed by name.

No differentiation is made in the kinship terms used between mother's and father's side of the family - a circumlocution being needed to indicate this. Male vs. female terms are common for all generations. From the 2nd ascending generation (grandparents) and beyond there is only one term for all males and one for all females for each generation (APO - grandfather; APMAH - grandmother). The same is true for the uncles (U LAY) and aunts (A DAW) although if the individual is older than the connecting parent a special age term is applied (DAW-GYI older aunt, U GYI - older uncle or "big sir.") A DAW is also used as a respect term toward any older woman. Younger

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